

Grouse Bear Management Unit Compliance Project- Memo to the Project File

Re: Old Growth and Forest Plan Consistency

Date: 4/16/2018

From: David Cobb, NZ NEPA Coordinator and Silviculturist

The purpose of this memo is to document that I have reviewed the proposed action (Alternative 2 in the draft EA) for the Grouse Bear Management Unit (BMU) Project for the purpose of determining whether or not the proposed action would be consistent with direction in the Forest Plan concerning the management of old growth.

The only action that is being proposed that has any potential of impacting existing old growth in the project area has to do with the proposed 2 mile re-route of the Forest Service road # 280 (called the Grouse Creek Road). The proposed action includes moving a section of that current road from the riparian zone along Grouse Creek, further upslope in order to reduce the amount of road sediments and washouts that periodically occur in Grouse Creek.

In order to re-route a portion of the road, approximately 1.5 miles of new road construction will need to occur upslope from the creek. That 1.5 miles of new road construction will go through several forest stands on National Forest land as well as across a small segment of private timber company land.

The Forest Plan contains a guideline, FW-GDL-VEG-02 (p. 19 of the Forest Plan), that states:

Road construction (permanent or temporary) or other developments should generally be avoided in old growth stands unless access is needed to implement vegetation management activities for the purpose of increasing the resistance and resilience of the stands to disturbances.

Therefore, in order to investigate whether or not the proposed new construction for the road 208 reroute was proposed in any old growth stands, I did the following review. I asked Sue Schilling (data base manager and GIS specialist) to overlay the proposed road location on top of the forest stand layer, and look to determine if any of those stands had been recorded in the past as meeting the definition of old growth. In addition, because our old growth stand layer is not perfect in terms of having all the old growth stands identified, I interviewed Jennifer Costich-Thompson, a Forest Service Botanist on the NZ of the IPNF who actually walked the proposed flag line through the forest stands. Through her botany, forester and silvicultural experience, Jennifer is familiar with the old growth definitions and minimum criteria in Green et al. (1992, errata corrected 12/11).

Sue Schilling indicated (attachment) that the new road construction would go through five stands on NF land and that none of those stands was identified as being OG in the FSVEG data base. I attached the note from Sue as well as the printout of the stand information. Sue provided me that information on 4/17/2018.

On 4/16/2018, I communicated with Jennifer Costich-Thompson and she indicated (see attachment) that when she walked the proposed new road construction route she did not believe any of the areas would meet the Green et al. criteria for OG.

Therefore, based on the information above, I conclude that FW-GDL-VEG-02 is not relevant because the new road construction would not go through old growth stands. For similar reasons, the other standards and guidelines in the Forest Plan for OG (FW-STD-VEG-01, 02 and FW-GDL-VEG-01) are also not relevant.

/s/ David Cobb

4/17/2018

Cobb, David F -FS

From: Schilling, Susan G -FS
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 9:42 AM
To: Cobb, David F -FS
Subject: RE:
Attachments: GrouseRerouteFSVeg.xlsx

Here is the table for the 5 stands that the Grouse Crk. Reroute lands in. Good news. No old growth of any kind.

From: Cobb, David F -FS
Sent: Tuesday, April 17, 2018 7:49 AM
To: Schilling, Susan G -FS <sgschilling@fs.fed.us>
Subject:

REGION_P	FOREST_A	FOREST_P	DISTRICT_N	LOCATION	SETTING_ID	NUM_EXAMS
01	04	04	06	4502	01040645020075	0
01	04	04	06	4502	01040645020083	0
01	04	04	06	4502	01040645020074	0
01	04	04	06	4502	01040645020029	0
01	04	04	06	4502	01040645020076	0

USGS_ANDER	ACRES	PV_REF_COD	PV_CODE
4	20.81	199	531
4	71.65	199	531
4	19.75	199	546
4	155.38	199	570
4	13.11	199	531

PV_NAME

western red cedar/bride's bonnet-bride's bonnet

western red cedar/bride's bonnet-bride's bonnet

western red cedar/British Columbia wildginger-British Columbia w

western hemlock/bride's bonnet.

western red cedar/bride's bonnet-bride's bonnet

R1_HABITAT

Mod Cool Moist to Wet

Mod Cool Moist to Wet

Mod Cool Moist to Wet

Mod Cool Moist to Wet

Mod Cool Moist to Wet

R1_BROAD_P	MT_ID_PV	BASAL_AR	YEAR_OF_STAND	AGE	OLD_GRO	OG_HAB	OG_FOR_TYP
warmmoist	thpl2	0	1938		79	0	
warmmoist	thpl2	0	1920		97	0	
warmmoist	thpl2	0	1936		81	0	
warmmoist	tshe	0	1935		82	0	
warmmoist	thpl2	0	1943		74	0	

OLD_GROW_1 OLD_GROW_2 OLD_GROW_3 OLD_GROW_4 OLD_GROW_5

0
0
0
0
0

OLD_GROW_6

TORCH_INDE

EV_REF_CIEV_CODE

TSMRSR1 DF

TSMRSR1 DF

TSMRSR1 BGA

TSMRSR1 L

TSMRSR1 L

EV_NAME	PURPOSE_REMARKS TSMRS_G TSMRS_SPEC	
Douglas-fir		0
Douglas-fir		0
Birch - Green Ash, Boxelder, Red alder		0
Larch		0
Larch		0

TSMRS_PI_S	TSMRS_HABT	STAND_COND	STAND_CC	MANAGEMENTTREE_LAYI	POLY_TO_
		R01	IMSA	4	Linked
AF93FM		R01	IMSA	4	Linked
		R01	IMSA	3	Linked
		R01	IPOL	4	Linked
EC53FM		R01	IPOL	4	Linked

MODIFIED_D	SHAPE_Len	SHAPE_Area
6/20/2017	1361.698	84161.66
6/20/2017	2594.87	289748.4
6/20/2017	1301.88	79861.35
6/20/2017	3721.51	628335.9
6/20/2017	1270.761	53021.9

Cobb, David F -FS

From: Costich-Thompson, Jennifer -FS
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2018 3:24 PM
To: Cobb, David F -FS
Subject: RE: Grouse BMU
Attachments: FloristicSurvey_FS RD 280 Reroute.pdf

Dave,

I'm sorry; although I have no doubt we discussed it, I don't recall that conversation in detail. If you're talking about the actual new proposed FSR280 re-route location, that's probably correct. For the most part, that proposed route dissects stands with multiple age classes. Most of the stands would probably be classified as mature (I'm guessing 80-120 years old), but there are definitely a few patches where old-age individual trees are present (a few large DF are present on the lower slope and two small pockets on benches have scattered large GF and/or larger/older 30-32" dbh C). In my mind, I doubt there were enough of those large, old trees per acre or the minimum acres necessary to meet our old growth standards. I do remember thinking as we surveyed that area that it was too bad that the proposed road location will need to go right through those small areas where large trees are present. Having Tom or Sue query the known stands there, in conjunction with my notes from that survey, seems legitimate to me.

I'm attaching my crew's notes from our survey of that re-route. Let me know if you need anything else. Thanks.



Jennifer Costich-Thompson
Botanist, Native Plant Material & Pollinator Coordinator
Forest Service
Idaho Panhandle National Forests, North Zone

p: 208-265-6626

f: 208-265-6670

jcostichthompson@fs.fed.us

1602 Ontario Street
Sandpoint, ID 83864

www.fs.fed.us



Caring for the land and serving people

From: Cobb, David F -FS
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2018 2:56 PM
To: Costich-Thompson, Jennifer -FS <jcostichthompson@fs.fed.us>
Subject: Grouse BMU

Hello Jennifer.

Hey, I'm writing up a little memo to the project file for the Grouse BMU Compliance project for old growth. I believe a long time ago, I asked you about this general topic and you indicated that you had walked the proposed road location for the new road construction and that you did not think any of the stands would meet the definition of old growth. If that is true, would you be comfortable if I were to say that in a memo to the file? I could let you review the draft first.

**USDA Forest Service
TES Plant Survey Field Form**

General Information				
Survey ID:	Survey Name: Grouse Creek Road Reroute FS RD 280			
Survey Status:	Source of Work: Force Account			
Survey Type:	Intuitive Controlled	Cursory	Field Check	General
Survey Focus:	Terrestrial	Riparian	Aquatic	Features
Estimate of Survey Area Size (acres):				
Elevation:	Min: 3000	Max:3100	Avg:3050	Elevation UOM:
State: Idaho	County: Bonner	Region: 1	Forest: IPNF	District: 6
Parameters of Survey: (Describe any ecological parameters, criteria, or combinations of these used to focus the survey. i.e. aspect, habitat types, soil types, forest conditions, etc.)				
Botanical survey focused on forest road in preparation for road obliteration.				
Check all rare plant guilds/habitats that apply:				
Moist Forest	<u> X </u>	Alpine/ Subalpine:	<u> </u>	
Wet Forest	<u> X </u>	Moist Cliffs/Seeps:	<u> </u>	
Dry Forest	<u> </u>	Aquatic:	<u> </u>	
Riparian	<u> </u>	Grassland:	<u> </u>	
Deciduous Rip.	<u> </u>	None:	<u> </u>	
Survey Comments: (Directions, area description, habitat, suitability, specific comments by unit, etc.)				
No concerns exists for the east half of this road re-route. Although there were a few, very scattered trees measuring 18-22"DBH @ 0548562x5368048, their spacing did not meet the acre minimum for Old Growth criteria. Similarly, @ 0548030x5367829 one 32" and one 30" THPL were along the road prism, but did not account for an entire acre.				
The widespread weeds CENBIE, CIRARV, HIECAE, HYPPER, LEUVUL, & TANVUL were present and maintained a more or less continuous and low cover% presence along the route.				
Site Visit Date:	Examiners (last name, first name):			
8/10/16	K. Bednarczyk			

Optional Location Information				
USGS Quad Number:482211615		USGS Quad Name:Wylie knob		
Forest Quad Number:		Forest Quad Name:		
Legal Description: (required where public land survey is available)				
Meridian:Boise		Township & Range:T59N, R8E		
Section:16	¼ sec.	QQ sec.:	QQQ sec.:	QQQQ sec.:
Latitude & Longitude: (either in degrees, minutes, seconds or decimal degrees)				
Geodetic Datum:				
Lat: Degrees	N	Min	Seconds	
Long: Degrees	W	Min	Seconds	
GPS Datum:				
GPS Lat. Dec. Degrees:		GPS Long. Dec. Degrees:		
UTM:				
UTM Datum:		UTM Zone:11U		
Easting:0548610		Northing:5368045		
GPS Unit used:	Manufacturer:	Model:		
<p>Directions to survey area:</p> <p>From hwy 95 in Samuels, head east on County Rd 794 and turn left on Grouse Creek road. Continue east as the road becomes FS RD 280. The proposed reroute is approximately 3-4 miles up the road on the north side of the road.</p>				
<p>Sketch of survey area: Please see attached map.</p>				